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## A Sketch of the Life of James Habersham

President of His Majesty's Council  
In the Province of Georgia

By WILLIAM BACON STEVENS

William Bacon Stevens, the writer of the following paper, was born in the State of Maine, moved to Savannah, Georgia in 1837, and in 1839 he and his associates, Israel Keech Tefft and Dr. Richard Dennis Arnold, founded the Georgia Historical Society, and he was elected its first Recording Secretary and Historiographer. It was his intention to write a history of Georgia, and all the material possessed by the Society was placed at his disposal for that purpose. The work was completed during his residence in Georgia, and published in two volumes. Dr. Stevens left this State in 1848, went to Philadelphia, and became a Bishop in the Protestant Episcopal Church. He died June 11, 1887, and some years afterwards many papers, collected by him in the preparation of his history, and done up in a large bundle addressed to the Georgia Historical Society, were sent to the Library. Among the papers was found the following, in his writing, unfinished, and probably begun by him with the intention of making it a part of a voluminous life of Mr. Habersham. On the other hand, the sketch may have been completed and the missing sheets afterwards lost; and it is not at all improbable that the paper was read at some meeting of the Georgia Historical Society. We give it as it came to us, adding to it, briefly, some further facts in the life of that good man, James Habersham, bringing it down to the time of his death.—EDITOR.

James Habersham was born at Beverly,, in Yorkshire, England, at the close of the year 1712. His parentage was respectable, and his early education rather superior to that usually given to sons in moderate circumstances in provincial towns. He made some progress in Latin Classics; and his naturally strong mind would have enabled him to rise to an eminent station as a scholar, had he not early turned his attention to mercantile affairs under the direction of his uncle, John Habersham, a merchant of considerable eminence in London.

With this gentleman he remained several years, and his prospects were daily ripening into a desirable maturity when his views of life suddenly changed and new plans usurped the place of his long cherished designs. In 1736 Rev. George Whitefield went to London and though his youthful appearance as he preached the first time in Bishopgate church caused many to mock, his earnest eloquence and ardent zeal soon brought him into conspicuous view and those who were at one time disposed to revile the almost juvenile herald of the Cross were soon brought to feel the truth of what he uttered and conform to his religious teachings.

Mr. Habersham was early brought under his influence, and the following year on the announcement of Whitefield's intention of going to Georgia determined to go with him and cast his lot among the same people where his spiritual friend had determined to labour. His uncle and other friends opposed his views, but his resolution was fixed, and in the latter part of December, 1737, he and his brother embarked on board the transport ship *Whitaker*, Captain Whiting, with Whitefield who styles Habersham "his dear fellow traveller." It was nearly a month, however, before the ship got fairly at sea as they were detained by head winds at Margate and Deal, and January had nearly passed before a favouring breeze called the two friends on board and forever separated Habersham from his relatives in England. The vessel was bound to Gibraltar to take in soldiers for Oglethorpe's regiment, and stretching down the Bay of Biscay they arrived at Gibraltar in about three weeks and there refreshed themselves preparatory to their longer voyage across the Atlantic. Having filled up the complement of men under Col. Pat Cochran and Capt. Mackay, they directed their course toward the setting sun, and day by day for weary weeks and months they saw him sink behind the horizon to which they steered without the wished for haven presenting itself to their longing vision. Soon after leaving Gibraltar a sickness broke out among the crew and passengers, and though only two or three died nearly all were prostrated by its violence and felt the severity of its attack. Fearful storms also were

superadded to the invasion of disease, and the wind and waves in terrible majesty threatened their vessel with destruction and themselves with death, but from all these dangers they were preserved, the disease was arrested, the tempests were hushed and the green land for which their eyes had longed and their hearts desired greeted their delighted vision. It was on Friday, 5th day of May, 1738, that the ship arrived at Tybee, and on the evening of Sunday the 7th, Messrs. Habersham and Whitefield reached Savannah where they were warmly welcomed by Mr. Delamotte, one of the companions of the Wesleys, and who had occasionally officiated in the services of the church. Mr. Habersham did not embark for Georgia as an adventurer, to repair a broken fortune, or retrieve a sullied name, for in becoming the companion of Whitefield he sacrificed the considerations of wealth and the comforts of an abundant home. Writing in January, 1738-39, to his brother-in-law, Christopher Bagwith, Esq., of Whitby, Yorkshire, he says "you may perhaps blame me for this adventure and wonder at my folly in leaving England where I was so well and genteelly provided for. I will not pretend to give you any reasons to justify my conduct in this great change because I believe as they did not proceed from any outward cause but were entirely and only known to God and my own soul, will not, nay cannot, give you that satisfaction and appear in that light they did to me, especially as the advantages I proposed to myself were not of this world, for I was told when I left England that if I went to Georgia I must renounce all and trust only in God and follow Christ through many tribulations and trials; though I thank God I have found it otherwise, I have enough and to spare of this world's goods and as the Apostle says, 'having food and raiment, I am content and rejoice with exceeding joy that I left my native country'." And the same sentiments are expressed in a letter to his uncle, written a month later.

A warm convert to the views of Mr. Whitefield, and ardently longing to give to his zeal a suitable and efficient direction, he had cast the world with its emoluments of wealth and honor behind him, and was ready to devote himself to every duty

which he thought would glorify his divine Master and do good to man. Whatever may be thought of the religious views of Habersham we must concede to him a pure and elevated philanthropy and admire his noble purpose of dedicating himself to the moral and intellectual condition of the colony.

That no time might be lost in carrying into immediate effect the scheme originally devised by Oglethorpe and Charles Wesley of erecting an Orphan House on the plan adopted by the venerable Prof. Francke, at Halle, it was determined by Habersham and Whitefield that the former should at once open a school, gather children eligible to such an institution and get them into a regular course of tuition and discipline, while the latter proceeded on a tour for the collection of funds wherewith to effectuate his plan. With characteristic ardour Mr. Habersham immediately gathered around him a little band of "precious lambs," as he affectionately termed them, and in this truly honorable employment the teaching of the young, and officiating in the absence of Whitefield in the public services of the church, he passed the few first years of his sojourn in Georgia. How he regarded his efforts will be evident from his own word: "When I was in England," he says, writing to a friend in London under date 14th January, 1739, "my proud heart abhorred the idea of keeping a school, and I have sometimes tho't that I would rather choose to take up with the most mean and servile employment than a schoolmaster's. Alas! this proceeded from rank pride and the want of a sound judgment to discern what was really good. I looked upon schoolmasters as a set of men that made gain the sole end of teaching and that made education to consist only in outward accomplishments to enable men to go through their worldly business with greater facility and ease. This was the highest and best notion I had entertained of them, but I am now thoroughly convinced that I very much undervalued them, for they certainly are or may be capable of doing more towards the advancement of religion and consequently the public good, than any men I knew of except the clergy." That this is the true view of such an avocation let the efforts which have been recently made, a century after

this paragraph was written, by lyceums, by teachers' conventions, and by normal schools testify. Teachers, even more than clergymen, are stationed at the head spring of society, and according to the directions which they give to the youthful mind and the influences which they bring to bear upon its formation will be the destiny of manhood and age of domestic, social, civil and religious character. The sentiments of Mr. Habersham upon the subject of education were exceedingly wise and judicious, and prove him to have been a man of vigorous intellect, of sound judgment, and of a discerning mind. "Education," he writes, "is indeed come to a very low ebb and in many places the very intention of it is so perverted that instead of its becoming one of the greatest blessings, as God designed it, it is made to have the effect of a curse, because the whole of education is laid out upon forming the outward man, making it appear to have all virtues, while the mind lies starving and has the reality of one virtue. Thus, children are taught to be hypocrites as soon as they can speak, and this grows up with them and fastens rich images of false virtue so strongly upon their minds that they will at least impose upon themselves and think that humility which may be rank pride, and that honesty, which may be down right knavery." At the time of the arrival of Habersham, and for a few years subsequent, the situation of the colony was peculiarly distressing. Not only were the inhabitants at war with the Spaniards at Florida and constantly alarmed by rumours of invasions and defeat, not only were they menaced with Indian eruptions instigated by the French at Appalachee and Mobile, but the strife and discord of party spirit were eating out the very vitals of the settlement, and fast reducing it to a state of atrophy and ruin arranged under two great heads, the friends and the foes of the Trustees, the people carried on their intestine feud with an acrimony and bitterness which respected neither rank nor character. The magistrates were arrayed against each other, the sanctity of the church was prostituted to a miserable partisanship, men, women and children were suborned to certify either to the benefit or the calamities of the colony. The violent denuncia-

tions against Oglethorpe were reiterated in his own ears, the plans of the Trustees were assailed by a hundred tongues, the powers of the magistrates set at nought and misrule bordering on anarchy paralyzed the efforts of friend and added pungency to the vituperations of enemies. Amidst these distressing turmoils Mr. Habersham quietly pursued his duties, prudently avoiding the disputations around him and never suffering himself to be entangled by the toils which both parties had spread to ensnare him. In this he exhibited both his wisdom and his strength, not that he was influenced by the fear of either, but that he rose superior to both. The condition of the colony engaged his most anxious thoughts, and while he conceded to the Trustees the most laudable motives, he saw the futility of their schemes and endeavored to remedy evils by judiciously pointing out their existence.

His letters upon the subject of colonial disputes were well and forcibly written, and evince great clearness of conception, and understanding of the principles of government and an intimate acquaintance with the actual condition of the province. Nerved by the approbation of a good conscience he wrote with a freedom and boldness which, while it startled, commanded respect, and while it probed the wound showed that it was done by one who could prescribe the balm of healing. His independent course drew upon him the disapprobation of both parties and the schoolmaster, as he is tauntingly called by Stevens, was often the theme of invective and reproach. Amidst all this he quietly pursued his course with unwavering diligence and lived down the calumnies of his enemies by his consistent and upright life. Having procured from the Trustees a grant for eight hundred acres of land which Habersham describes as situated upon the salts in the midst of the settlement, about nine miles from town, "the best place I have seen for the Orphan House," he proceeded at once to collect material and erect a dwelling.

It was the original intention of Whitefield before he left England to take in only 20 orphan children, but finding on his

arrival in Savannah so many objects of charity he enlarged his design so as to comprehend all the necessitous children around him.

Such was the energy used by Habersham, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of the colony and the place, that on the 3rd November, 1741, in about a year after the selection of his site, he was enabled to remove the children to the house which he named Bethesda, believing that it would prove what its name indicated, a House of Mercy. At this time in addition to the care of 20 or 30 children he superintended an equal number of workmen in the erection of the building, occupying as yet the outhouses only, the main dwelling having been retarded in consequence of the capture by the Spaniards of a sloop loaded with bricks and other material for Bethesda.

He also at this time planned and directed the making of the first road cut in the colony extending from the Orphan House to Savannah,\* and in addition to all these labours maintained a voluminous correspondence with a great variety of individuals in America and England, and of every grade from His Majesty's Governors and the Bishops' commissary to the Religious Society of Soldiers at Gibraltar and the prisoner in the loghouse. These labours proved too onerous for his frame already wasted by a distressing disease and he was several times laid aside by its violent recurrences. For years he was the victim of frequent and intense physical suffering which the heat of summer was sure to increase, though the return of winter brought a temporary alleviation and repose. Indeed he was several times tempted to return to England or emigrate to the north as the only hope of obtaining permanent benefit, but having laboured thus long he was anxious to remain and gather in the ripening harvest which he saw growing up around him, the first fruit of his self-sacrificing devotion. These frequent indispositions were not without their salutary effect, for while he felt with Archbishop Leighton that "this poor life is all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and many

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\*This is a mistake. The roads to Darlen and Augusta were both laid out before this, and it is probable that other short roads, running to various plantations, were in actual use before the founding of Bethesda.



deaths," he also experienced the truth of the forcible simile of Watts that "Physical infirmities, like breaks in a wall, let in the light of divine truth into the imprisoned soul and make it long for its release." Such was emphatically its effect upon himself. His piety based on the theological views of Whitefield's was like Whitefield subject to extreme mutations oftener in a transition than a quiescent state. But whether contending with Giant Despair in Doubting Castle or standing with the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains, he was the same scrupulous, conscientious and upright man. With him religion occupied no secondary place and though his christian rectitude so diverse from the devious course of those around him exposed him to much malice and opposition, he firmly and unmoved endured every reproach and compelled respect where violence had been threatened. Bethesda speedily prospered under the wise administration of Habersham. The number of children increased, the artisans employed were faithful in their work, the buildings reared by the hand of Charity in a colony of charity daily grew into shape and beauty, the spirit of the institution was gradually developing and its benefits were becoming sensibly apparent. Having satisfactorily arranged the affairs of the Orphan House he turned his thoughts to the formation of his own domestic establishment and at the close of 1740 was united by Rev. Mr. Whitefield to Miss Mary Bolton, daughter of Robert and Ann Bolton, of Philadelphia. He was by Mr. Whitefield esteemed too young for the charge he must necessarily assume, but Mr. Habersham said "that was no objection with me as I well knew her pious prudent behavior exceeded those of twice her years," and in his communication to her parents announcing their marriage, he fervently writes: "I bless God from my heart for bringing us together. My love to her increases daily and the more I know her the more I love her and the more reason I have to be thankful." The influence of this union was highly beneficial, it broke up those austere habits which were gradually fastening upon him; it gave more symmetry and proportion to his religious character and gathered

around a heart wounded and sore from the rude conflicts of opposition the kindly influences of home and the chastened pleasure of the domestic circle.

In Mrs. Habersham was beautifully patterned forth the christian wife and mother. Her whole life was a blessing to her husband, and her character a bright example to her children. Often did Habersham speak of her with enthusiastic admiration and throughout the long and troublous years of their existence she made his home a Goshen of affection, and was herself the attractive centre of its happy circle.

But the quiet of Bethesda was not long undisturbed. In the malicious persecution to which the religious opinions of Habersham rendered him obnoxious, the magistrantes, though they dared not make a direct assault upon his character, endeavored to harass him and entoil him in some indiscretion which would expose him to legal measures by threatening to place the Orphan House under their supervision, and taking in their own hands its entire control. To effect their object, false representations were widely circulated. The Trustees were told that the manager of Bethesda was opposed to their scheme of silk culture, which greatly incensed that honorable body, and Parliament was assured that it was but a Methodist school for the training up of children "on Methodist principles." The magistrates claimed the right to appoint and to remove from the institution at pleasure, to direct its internal policy and to apprentice the children at a suitable age to those whom they should choose to be the masters of them. This Mr. Habersham resisted; the dispute engendered much acrimony and fully developed the malign views of the Bailiffs who determined to thwart if they could not crush an institution, the influence of which was an ever torturing rebuke to their unjust proceedings. Oglethorpe, the Trustees, and Parliament, misguided in their information, leaned for a time toward the measures of the magistrates, but after a careful survey of the whole subject they recovered a proper tone of feeling, censured the assistant and indicated and confirmed the course of Habersham. The prejudice of Oglethorpe, now dissipated, were supplanted by a

pleasing personal and epistolary intercourse in which Habersham beautifully blended the courtesies of the gentleman with the candor of the christian, and while he conceded to him that respect which was justly his due he scorned to flatter his pride or lend himself to a servile and fawning sycophancy. The distinguished founder of Georgia received from the pen of Habersham many lessons which, had he duly practiced, would have elevated the colony from its depression and made it the joy and the praise of its numerous benefactors.

Under date of Bethesda, 1st August, '41, he thus writes to Oglethorpe and saw the justice and felt the value of his calm but judicious remonstrance. He understood the temper and spirit in which they were written and saw in them neither the promptings of jealousy nor the petty bickerings of revengful malice. The truly great mind rises above the angry paroxysms which assail the weak more fully at the expense of his error and instead of expending his feelings in useless irritation sets himself at once to the work of reformation.

To err is human, but to profit by "the faithful wound of a friend" is one of the highest ends of human wisdom. Habersham saw that many of the plans of Oglethorpe were futile, that others were of a doubtful tendency and some absolutely ruinous, with a knowledge of Oglethorpe's character then remarkably clear and accurate and with a high estimation of his worth. Habersham felt that he more nobly did his duty by a plain statement of truths, however unpalatable, than by artfully deceiving where deception was ruin.

In December, '41, the house contained 23 English, 10 Scotch, 4 Dutch, 5 French, 7 American, 27 English orphans, 16 boys and 26 girls. All objects of charity except 3. The general condition of the establishment may be inferred from extracts of Habersham's Letters to Gov. Belcher of Mass., and Hugh Bryan of South Carolina.

The threatened invasion of the Spaniards in 1742 created much excitement and alarm at the Orphan House. Situated on the frontier of the Savannah settlement at a distance from any fort, with no means of self defense, it was peculiarly ex-

posed, and its inhabitants underwent many and painful trials on the occasion. In a letter to Whitefield Habersham details their situation.

After his return to Bethesda he renews his correspondence with Oglethorpe. A change was now to take place in the situation of Mr. Habersham by which his more immediate connection with the Orphan House ceased, though his interest in it remained firm and undeviating. To this change he had long been urged, but repeatedly declined until the necessities of the place seemed so great that he was at last induced to form a partnership with Mr. Francis Harris and established in 1744, under the firm of H. & H., the first commercial house in Savannah.\* For the first few years their trade was mostly with the Northern colonies where their credit was good and their mercantile reputation high. Success prompted more extensive operations, and in 1747 they established a correspondence in London and began the system of direct importation. The principal exports at that time were pitch, tar, rice and peltry, and they hoped by furnishing an early and accessible medium of conveyance to encourage the growth of indigo, and, by adding that to the list of staple products, turn towards America a large portion of the 200,000 pounds which England annually paid France for that article.

The difficulties consequent on the establishment of such an enterprise were neither few nor trivial. From the produce of the colony but little could be expected.

Agriculture was greatly neglected. Negroes were not allowed for the carrying on of large plantations and that which was raised was not even sufficient for their own consumption, being entirely supplied with several necessary articles of food from Carolina. The Indian trade was unsettled and fluctuating, owing to the fact that the furs brought to Savannah had to be shipped to Charleston at an expense of 7-6 stg. per hundred

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\*Notwithstanding this statement, which has been often repeated, the Georgia Colonial Records show that the mercantile establishment of Minis & Salomons existed in Savannah as far back as December 29, 1736, and that the firm name was changed to Abraham Minis & Company in 1740.

where they were subject to a custom house duty of 1 shilling per skin, making a total of expense of nearly 30 shillings per hundred.

The object, then, of Habersham was:

1st. By opening commercial intercourse with other places, to excite greater attention to agriculture, so that the staple products of the colony might be raised in sufficient quantities for exportation.

2nd. To draw towards Savannah the trade and produce of the lower part of Carolina contiguous to Georgia.

3rd. To prevent the onerous charges incident to the Indian trade by clearing hides and furs directly from Savannah; and lastly by inducing ships to visit the place, to call around them the various artisans requisite for a sea port and drawing from the necessary expenses of the vessels a large revenue for the improvement of the colony.

The views of Mr. Habersham upon these topics are elaborately given in a letter to Mr. Bolzius.

While thus joyful in the exercise of his vocation with a soul growing in grace and enlarging under the rich experience of heavenly goodness he was called to suffer a severe affliction in the loss of his brother, who had settled at Frederica.

To this brother a few months before occurred one of those incidents which transpire in nearly every newly settled colony and which excite the sympathy and unite the efforts of friend and foes in the great cause of humanity. On Thursday the 3rd of August, 1738, he accompanied Rev. Mr. Whitefield on his way to Frederica as far as Vernon river, and returning thence he missed his way, and finding some difficulty with one of his horses, left one tied to a tree near a swamp and reached home after much labor next morning, though the distance to Vernon river was only 10 miles. The continuation of the story I give in the words of Col. Stephens as recorded at the time in his journal, Vol. I, page 258.

"Wednesday, August 9, 1738. A trading boat, bound for Charles-Town, from New Windsor, arrived, by whom came one of our principal licensed traders who reported that the Creek

Indians among whom he lived were in a very good disposition and hearty towards us. An accident happened which it was feared might prove of fatal consequence. Upon Mr. Whitefield's going for Frederica, he rode as far as Vernon river, taking Mr. Habersham, the schoolmaster's brother, with him, with intent that he should bring the horses back, while he himself proceeded by water, but the young man, missing his way home, and getting into a swamp through which he could not get his horse that he had to follow, he left him tied to a tree, and with difficulty got home in the morning, after much wandering and fatigue. A day or two after he took two people of the town out with him to try if he could get the horse which he left tied; but whereabouts it was he could not tell, which occasioned them to ramble far and wide from each other, till at length they could not tell how to meet again; and the townsmen at length returned home again, hoping to find Mr. Habersham there also. But nobody hearing anything of him yet, since he and his companions parted yesterday in the forenoon, his friends, with reason, began to be alarmed, and all good people wished to give what assistance they could. Night was coming on, and Mr. Causton being not in town Mr. Parker and I thought it advisable in such an emergency to get some damaged powder out of the stores, and ordered a gun to be fired now and then at a small distance of time (once in an hour or less) so that if happily he was within hearing it might be a guide to him what course to take. Then we sent to get two or three Indians ready against morning, and several active men with horses engaged to be ready very early, by whose joint endeavors we hoped some good would come of it; which was all could be done instantly, the sky being very dark.

"Thursday, 10. The horsemen went out several ways towards those parts where the man had lost himself, and continued their search all day, firing pistols, and calling frequently on each other; but returned in the evening without success, and the Indians who went out with them continued abroad all night, endeavoring to find some track of him; but our hopes began to fail of making any good discovery——.

"Friday, 11. ——— The young man who was about given over as lost was at last happily found again, wherein Providence seemed in a particular manner to show itself. One of the inhabitants of Hampstead, who, among others, had been seeking him two days in vain had so strong an impression made on him in the night that he could not rest; wherefore, going out again this morning, in a short time, upon firing his pistol, he heard the poor man make a faint answer, and then he soon came up with him. He had been three days bewildered in a swamp which was on this side of Vernon river, the largest in all the country, and in many places impassable, but was now got within a small distance of Hampstead, which was more than he knew, and being quite spent he was laid down, expecting never to have risen again, when he heard this honest man's gun, who carried him to his home, gave him milk and what he had, and then came and acquainted his friends with it, who went and brought him joyfully to town."

The death of this young man afterwards who was a sincere christian "all affability, love and humility," as his brother terms him, was a severe blow to Mr. Habersham who was now left in America without one single tie of consanguinity to bind him to its shores. But while he mourned his loss he rejoiced in his brother's gain, believing from the evidence of his life that he had exchanged earth for the blessedness of Heaven.

Here ends the Stevens manuscript. The subsequent career of Mr. James Habersham will now be briefly related, in order to have all the important events in his life brought together in an unbroken account.

A fact worthy of mention as showing the honorable character of Mr. Habersham is told in connection with his qualifications as a man of business. In response to an appeal from the Rev. Mr. Bolzius, the Salzburger minister at Ebenezer, for information on the subject of agriculture and commerce, Mr. Habersham consented to write a letter expressing his views, with the understanding that, as in doing so he would have something to say concerning a number of men of influence in Georgia and advert to the plans of the Trustees, without having the

consent of those interested, the contents of the communication be considered confidential. Urged to modify his conditions he agreed to let Mr. Bolzius furnish a copy of the letter to a friend in Germany, and that friend sent a copy to the Trustees, which act, of course, caused Mr. Habersham to believe that displeasure, at least, would be expressed by that body; but, to his surprise, his knowledge was recognized, and his ability so clearly shown that his appointment as Assistant to the President of the Province of Georgia quickly came.

Shortly after, in 1750, he and Pickering Robinson were made commissioners to look after the matter of the culture of silk in the colony, in a renewed effort to make it, as at first intended, one of the chief industries.

The next step in his promotion was his appointment, while John Reynolds was Governor, in 1754, as Secretary of the Province and a Councillor; and in 1767 he was advanced to the office of President of the Upper House of the General Assembly.

The highest position reached by Mr. Habersham was that of Acting Governor of the Province of Georgia which he attained in 1769, when Sir James Wright, the Governor, went to England on leave of absence. By the term of the commission issued to Governor Wright it was declared that "upon the death, or absence, of the Governor, the eldest Councillor whose name is first placed in his Majesty's instructions shall take upon him the administration of the Government," and Wright named Habersham as the man, asserting that he was "a gentleman of property, and no Liberty Boy." He received the appointment, and his conduct during the time he was at the head of the government gave satisfaction to those above him in the mother country. Realizing the responsibility resting upon him, he thus addressed the Assembly on the 29th of April: "I am very sensible of the high and important post committed to me, which calls for the utmost of my best abilities to discharge, so as to approve myself to our most gracious Sovereign, by promoting the true interest and prosperiay of his good subjects in this Province, to effect which you may depend on my most sincere and unwearied endeavors. My long residence in this Province, and



the strong attachment I must have for its welfare from motives obvious to you must make it extremely grateful to me to be in the least instrumental in furthering its growing prosperity."

As showing his regard for certain rights of the colonies, while holding a deep feeling of loyalty for the mother country, the following passage is taken from a letter he wrote to the Earl of Hillsborough on American affairs. He admits the right of Parliament in some respects, but seems to doubt the propriety of asserting those rights to the fullest extent, and asks "whether it would not be expedient to make some alteration in the Constitution relative to America."

From this period he had the same troubles which later on devolved on Sir James Wright when the latter returned to Georgia from England. It is not possible here to give in detail the account of his disagreement with the American party in the Legislature on the question of the election of a Speaker and the right of the representatives of the King to negative the vote of the Assembly. When the Assembly met their choice of a Speaker was Dr. Noble Wymberley Jones, a man who was outspoken in his opinion of the unjust dealings of England with the colonies. For that reason Mr. Habersham informed the two gentlemen of the Assembly sent to notify him of their choice that he would not recognize the appointee, and instructed them to choose another. Dr. Jones was again elected, and again Mr. Habersham negatived him. The next day Mr. Habersham went to the Council Chamber, fully intending to dissolve the Assembly, unless his demand for a different Speaker should be complied with; but he was informed that, in the meanwhile, Mr. Archibald Bulloch had been elected, the message, however, not apprising him of the fact that Dr. Jones had been a third time chosen but had, under the circumstances, declined. Having approved of the choice of Bulloch without knowing the full particulars, on hearing of the persistent action of the Assembly up to the refusal of Dr. Jones, Habersham informed that body that he would not approve of Mr. Bulloch's

election until the record of the third choice of Jones had been expunged from the minutes, and the result was that he dissolved the Assembly.

In the year 1775, when South Carolina resolved to hold no intercourse with Georgia because the latter declined to become a member of the American Association and to take part in the proceedings of the Continental Congress, Mr. Habersham thus expressed his views to a friend in London :

"Savannah, Ga., April 17, 1775.

"The fiery patriots in Charleston have stopped all dealings with us, and will not suffer any goods to be landed there from Great Britain, and I suppose the Northern Provinces will follow the example.

"The people on this continent are generally almost in a state of madness and desperation ; and should not conciliatory measures take place on your side, I know not what may be the consequence. I fear an open rebellion against the Parent State, and consequently among ourselves.

"Some of the inflammatory resolutions and measures taken and published in the Northern colonies, I think, too plainly portend this.

"However, I do most sincerely upon every occasion declare that I would not choose to live here longer than we are in a state of proper subordination to, and under Great Britain ; although I cannot altogether approve of the step she has lately taken, and do most cordially wish that a permanent line of government was drawn and pursued by the mother country and her children, and may God give your Senators wisdom to do it, and heal the breach, otherwise I cannot think of the event but with horror and grief—father against son, and son against father, and the nearest relatives and friends combating with each other ! I may, perhaps, say with truth, cutting each other's throats. Dreadful to think of, much more to experience."

At the time the foregoing was written it is probable that the writer of those words was aware of the weakness of his physical system. It would seem, from all the references to his

health in the documents available, that he was not a robust or strongly built man. He went North for the benefit of his health in the summer of that year, 1775, and Sir James Wright wrote to the Earl of Dartmouth, July 10, "Mr. Habersham is gone to Philadelphia for the recovery of his health," and on the 1st of November he announced his death to the same person in these words: "Ten days ago I had an account of the death of Mr. Habersham, one of his Majesty's Council and Secretary of this Province." Mr. Habersham's death occurred August 28, 1775, at New Brunswick, New Jersey.